

I Know One Business That Isn't Suffering In This Economy

We had to go to the ER yesterday, and it was bustling! Since this is our second visit in a month, I can tell you that unfortunately, yesterday's busyness was not any different from the norm. Seeing as how we're talking about a hospital as a business that's doing well in this awful economy, that is not a good thing.

Here's what happened, and it's not a matter of life or death (at least for us), so don't be alarmed about the ER visit. My husband had been having severe stomach pain since Sunday afternoon that was getting worse, so that's why we went to the ER. Turns out to be a virus, so that's great of course! We were thinking kidney stone or something worse, so we're very thankful. While we were in the ER, some interesting events unfolded regarding some of the other patients. First, there was the girl who left her contacts in for 2 weeks out of "laziness". She finally took them out, and the next morning, her eyes hurt, they were all swollen, and she couldn't see. The doctor speculated that the contacts had become fused to her eyeball and actually tore the top layer off when she removed them. They sent her to an eye specialist.

Next was the couple who came in with the woman (girl actually – they were probably in their late teens or early twenties) complaining of burning during urination. My husband overheard the doctor ask the girl how many sexual partners she's had in the last 60 days. She answered, "just my boyfriend." Then they asked the boyfriend the same question, but they did it while the girlfriend was in the bathroom, and he said he didn't know – yikes. More than 10, they asked, and he said, "yeah." I wonder if they waited to ask the boyfriend until

the girlfriend was out of the room on purpose. I wonder if they're going to tell the girlfriend. Makes an interesting moral argument... there's something someone should know, yet there's doctor-patient confidentiality... but then again, the boyfriend wasn't a patient, his girlfriend was the patient. Maybe the doctor's job dictates whether or not he would have to tell the girlfriend. What if her symptoms are indicative of an STD, then the doctor would have to tell her that of course... wonder if he'd mention her boyfriend's infidelity as well. Well, that's enough time on that story – onto the third ER story, which is sad...

The doctors and nurses started rushing around even more than they were before, and they all kept talking about how they were about to get much busier. "Something's coming in..." they were saying. I started overhearing snippets of conversation including something about calling the state fire marshall and an autopsy... Turns out someone had been found dead in their basement after their house was on fire. That is not a usual occurrence around here; this was a big deal at the ER. There was a sheriff walking around, and a body bag was wheeled down the hall. A sad event, no doubt, but something that would seem like just another day at work to doctors and nurses working at an urban hospital. I wonder what the circumstances of the fire are; I read in the newspaper that when firefighters arrived, there was only a little smoke showing on the roof. The man was found dead in the basement, so that seems a little suspicious. The state fire marshall is conducting a joint investigation with the sheriff's office, so maybe when they're done the story will be back in the newspaper. Well, anyway, I'm just relieved that all is well with my husband. I hope not to have to see if the ER remains busy any time soon!

Miss Kasandra Scarlet Did It In The Spa With The Dumbell

The classic board game Clue is getting a makeover. Sure, there's been lots of variations of it over the years; among them Simpsons Clue, Disney's Haunted Mansion Clue, Dvd Clue, and Clue Jr. But now they are giving the game a more modern look by changing characters, weapons, and rooms. Here are some of the changes:

- Colonel Mustard is now Jack Mustard, a former football player
- Professor Plum is now Victor Plum, a billionaire video game designer
- Mr. Green is now Jacob Green, an African-American
- New Rooms: theater, spa and guest house
- Weapons: Hasbro replaced the lead pipe, revolver and wrench with a dumbbell, trophy and poison
- Each of the characters has a special sleuthing power

Hmm, I'm not so sure about this. I tend to like things the way they are. I've played both versions of a few board games that have been modernized, like Pay Day and Life, and I strongly prefer the original versions. I guess we'll have to see, although it will probably be a long time before I try the new Clue because I buy my games at the thrift store. The only way the new Clue will get to the thrift store super quick is if it really stinks!

Now I REALLY Hate Walmart

And my husband is on the bandwagon too. My husband is a clearance maniac – he loves finding good deals on stuff that's been marked down from its original price. He found he especially loved the clearance deals at the Defiance Ohio Walmart, which is not too far from us. But yesterday, that changed...

It turns out that the Defiance Walmart, which is only a few months old, by the way, changed their clearance prices overnight! They used to have some really good discounts, and it was fun to go there and try to find them. But now, they haven't just changed the way they mark stuff down; they've taken actual clearance items that were already marked down and marked them back up!

Case in point: My husband had a Plantronics Headset that he bought last week for \$5. It broke, so he was going to return it, but he forgot it at home. No problem, he thought, I'll just buy a new one for \$5 and return the old one another time. WRONG – unless he wanted to spend \$21 on the new one! That's right, they took a \$5 clearance item and marked it up to \$21 – more than **quadruple** the price!!! So he asked the lady in electronics if they raised their clearance prices, and she said, "I'm not going to lie to you. We did raise the prices. They took away our clearance budget." Whatever that means. Not something I, the consumer, should be concerned with... except that they took all the fun out of clearance shopping at Walmart! And of course the people at customer service couldn't help us return our headset since we didn't have the broken one with us... their suggestion? Buy a new one for \$21, then return the broken one later for \$5 – thanks but no thanks! Here are some other examples of clearance items that they re-inflated: ATI Video Card from \$50 to \$115, Panasonic Cordless Phone from \$30 to \$69, and a US Robotics SkypePhone from \$5 to \$16. Each of these items had at least a

100% increase in price. I understand that the economy sucks and inflation and blah, blah, but I think Walmart should have kept these items on the clearance where they had them; then started their new clearance policy with new clearance items. I mean, come on, is Walmart really that worried about going broke?

The bottom line is, Walmart keeps finding ways to take away whatever fun is left in shopping. First it was by playing their little pricing games that get us to spend more and close down their competition, and now they've taken away their good clearance deals. Well, maybe their policies will bite them in the you-know-what come Christmas time when they don't have any room on their shelves for the new Christmas products because no one wants to touch their crappy clearance items at their not-so-clearance prices!

A Can Of Formula And A Pack Of Marlboros, Please

Yesterday we made a trip to our second-closest Walmart, and that location keeps their baby formula behind the counter, with the cigarettes. I guess formula theft is rampant, at least at that Walmart location. The cashier said something about it being used to make drugs, but I don't know if that's just her own hypothesis or if it's true, but it doesn't really make sense to me. Whatever the reason, it's so much more inconvenient for us regular shoppers. Not only do I have to remember to get the formula on the way out, but we have to stand in a special line since only the one checkout lane has the formula. Then you have to be clear on which kind you want, and you have to make sure the cashier knows what you're

talking about because there are at least 10 varieties. It would stink to come home and find that you were given the wrong kind or had forgotten the formula altogether, which did happen to me last time I shopped at that Walmart location. Anyone who has or has had little kids can understand how crazy kids can get in the checkout line. Not only is it boring (especially at Walmart, where it often takes forever and a day also), but they're nice enough to stock both sides of the aisle with plenty of tempting goodies for kids, conveniently all at eye level. So the kids often are going crazy in the checkout line, and now the weary parent is expected to remember they still need their formula (and probably cigarettes, the way the shopping trip is going!) and to make sure they get the right kind of formula. It's a stupid set-up, and I really hope they don't implement this change at my local Walmart where I do most of my shopping. I have a suggestion that would make things a wee bit easier if they insist on keeping the formula behind the counter. In the baby section of the store, have papers with bar codes on them corresponding to the different types of formulas. That way, we can just grab the slip we need and put it in our cart, eliminating the need for remembering to get the formula later or confusion with the cashier. This system works well when you buy large items, like swingsets, so why not try it with formula?

And while we got on the subject of drugs with the cashier, she told us an interesting tidbit about Walmart's cash registers. It seems they are trained to recognize the combination of supplies one needs to create a meth lab. If someone buys this combination of items, the register will alert the employee. Now I'm as opposed to meth labs as the next person, and I certainly don't want them in my neighborhood, but when the Walmart cash register is programmed to tell you what *not* to buy... I think that's a little too much. Big brother, here we come...

Lookit The Cute Meeses

Two baby moose are called what? Twin baby mooses, I guess... But anyway, check out this really cute video I received via email – a baby moose finds someone’s backyard sprinkler, then he goes over and “tells” his mommy and twin brother about it, and they all enjoy themselves tremendously. The mommy moose grooms her babies in it, and the babies play together – it’s SO cute!

Sure beats the other baby moose video I saw this week – we won’t go into that (you fellow CNN junkies know what I’m talking about), just nature taking its course, I guess... But let’s focus on the cute mooses (?) playing in the sprinkler instead:

[Click here](#) for some extremely cute baby animal action.

Butts On The Floor – In The Grocery Store?

I don’t know how this memory came about, but recently I was thinking about how acceptable smoking used to be in our society. You were allowed to smoke anywhere and everywhere – airplanes, restaurants, bowling alleys, and grocery stores, to name a few places. Yes, I said grocery stores. I have distinct memories of being a kid and playing with the floor at the grocery store. I was playing with the floor because it had colored tiles on it that resembled a maze, and grocery

shopping is so *boring* for a kid that there really isn't anything else to do but look at the floor and play with it. While navigating my maze on the floor, I distinctly remember seeing – and stepping around – cigarette butts. People used to smoke cigarettes while shopping for food – ew. So does that mean that all the food that was brought home had packaging that reeked of cigarette smoke? It's hard to imagine, especially given society's view on smoking today. But I remember it, and I'm really thankful that we've come such a long way. I can no longer stand the smell of cigarette smoke, and if I had to smell it while shopping at Walmart, it would make the place that much more unbearable.

And while we're on the topic of inappropriate places to smoke, that reminds me of something I forgot to mention in my Mummy movie review post. While watching the movie, we kept smelling cigarette smoke; 2 or 3 times. Someone was definitely smoking in the theater, but my question is, who would do something like that? Was their addiction so out of control that they honestly couldn't make it through an entire movie? And we're not talking about *The Dark Knight*, a movie that runs 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The new Mummy movie was not even over 2 hours, and someone couldn't make it that long without a cigarette (or two or three)? That sounds like a problem they should get help for. At the very least, they should have stayed home then, where they could smoke all they wanted without bothering anyone else. I was really irritated. Not just because I hate the smell and wasn't expecting to have to deal with it at a movie theater, but mostly because I had our new baby with me and I didn't want his innocent lungs poisoned with cigarette smoke. I never saw who was doing it, but I suspected maybe it was some rebellious teenagers doing it because they could get away with it. But I didn't see any teenagers leaving the theater. I tried to smell everyone that walked by, but I came up with no suspects. Oh, well... if it happens again, I think I'll report it; I just didn't feel like missing the movie. And I really didn't think that after the first cigarette

they'd go ahead and light another... How utterly rude and completely thoughtless. I hope the culprit saw the baby on the way out and felt guilty... but I'm sure that someone with the nerve to smoke in a movie theater wouldn't care enough to regret it.

NOT FOR THE FAINT OF STOMACH

Over the many years I have been employed in retail, I have had several horror stories. Today, I had one involving a vendor and our restroom. The person who regularly brings in our daily supply of nation wide chain donuts had to use of facilities. Shortly after he returned, our assistant manager had to visit the lavatory. Minutes later, I was called to the front and was advised to go and look in the bathroom. I had my suspicions and said... that is ok, I can use my imagination. Shortly thereafter, I was informed that our delivery man must have had a weak bladder as there was a rather sizable puddle covering much of our rather small bathroom floor. To make matters worse, the sink was totally dry, no indication that he had washed after he missed the stool. The female cashier and I had a short debate concerning male and female bathroom practices. The result of the incident resulted in a phone call to the donut distributor. I wonder if this particular driver will be making any deliveries anytime soon or if he does, will he be able to look at the store in the same light. I feel sorry for the next stop on his route. One thing is for sure, I will definitely not be eating any of their donuts for quite a while. Kind of reminiscent of a creamed chicken sandwich incident at a wedding reception. This deliveryman must qualify for a real genius.

Rollback, Shmollback

Now that I'm well on my way to full recovery after being unable to do normal things for so long because of the pregnancy and cesarean, I've resumed my big grocery shopping days at Walmart. And since I haven't been there much in the past few months, I was shocked to find how much many of the prices have raised. So this inspired me to make a list of all the prices I remember from when our Super Walmart opened 26 months ago. I did some math, and this is what I came up with. The first price is how much the item was for the first few months the Super Walmart was open. The second price is how much the item is now, and the percent is the percentage the price has increased in 26 months.

parmesan cheese – \$2.94 to 4.18 = **42%**
american cheese singles – 1.98 to 2.58 = 30%
shredded cheese – 1.98 to 2.58 = 30%
garbage bags – 1.67 to 2.98 = **78%**
bananas – 19¢ to 58¢ per pound = **almost 49%**
toilet paper – 1.00 to 1.24 for a six pack = 24%
baby wipes – 1.44 to 2.16 for one pack = **50%**
baby formula – 10.64 to 11.88 per can = 11%
milk – 2.00 to 3.80 = **90%**

I'm no math whiz, but if I did the calculations correctly, this is insane. I realize there is inflation, the economy is terrible, and food comes in on trucks which use gas whose cost has also skyrocketed, but this is still ridiculous. I used to love Walmart for their one-stop shopping concept, but now I hate them for ruining the little guy and for always changing their prices. It makes it impossible to shop around for the best price unless you have no job or kids – and they know it. **WALMART SUCKS!** But I will keep shopping there, and they know

it. Why? Because with 4 kids, I don't have time to go to a bunch of stores trying to find the best price. I need to go where I can get it all under one roof.

Ok, I'm done venting... at least until my next Walmart trip...

Ok, I just thought this was neat..

I was just doing a little late night surfing and found this in the "Odd News section". Seems like [fighting beetles](#) is a big thing.

After you see the video can you imagine the size of those beetles? According to Wikipedia, the [Rhinoceros Beetle](#) are among the largest beetles in the world. I don't think I want to see something that big crawling around in my house.

I'm not sure I like the idea of beetle fights, but then again we still have one or two frog jumping contests in the US. Probably much the same.

Drinking Games

Ok, there is a war on drugs, a war on terror, a war on wars, but now [awar on beer pong](#).

I never really heard of this game until I was with some young people just after my daughter's wedding last summer. I never

really saw much point to the game, and it seemed to me that the people playing were drinking just as much beer while playing the game as they were forced to by the other team making a point. Not much to the game at all.

But it was going to be released for the Wii and all heck breaks loose. I can see why you wouldn't want to condone the game, but it isn't any worse than some of the other games out there. Judge it with you Dollars folks. If you don't like it don't buy it. Bad products will fade away in time. Drawing it to our attention in the news is just free advertising. I didn't see it there, but I wonder if beer pong spread anymore after the announcement of the beer pong fight...

Oh well...

Anyone care to join me the the Star Trek drinking game. ☐

This blog does not condone the use/abuse of alcohol. Please remember don't drink and drive. Alcohol should only be used by adults over the age of 21.

IF you don't like anything you read here, you can just ignore it. It may just go away on its own.